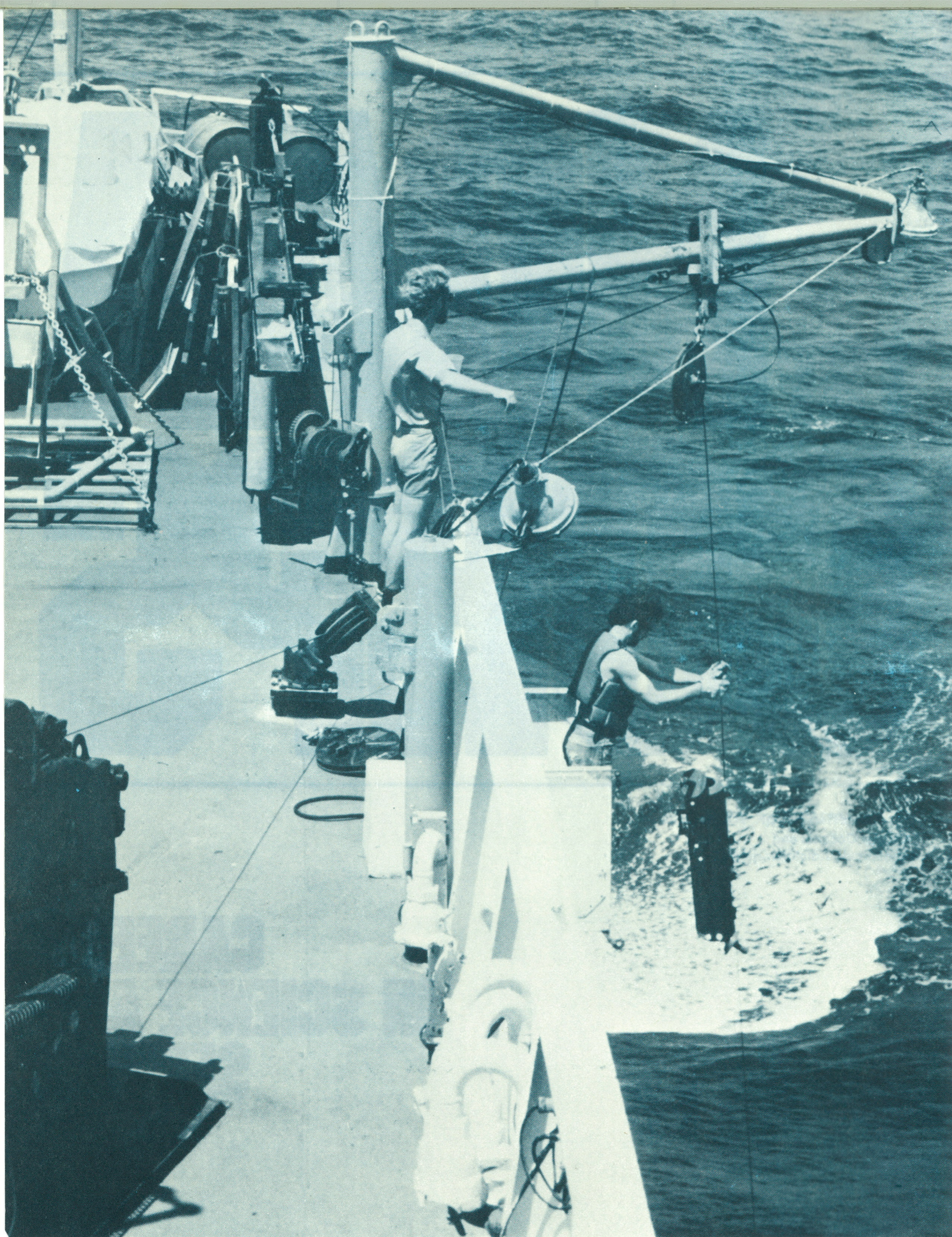

THE NOAA CORPS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration

**CAREERS
IN SCIENCE AND
SERVICE**



SCIENCE AND SERVICE

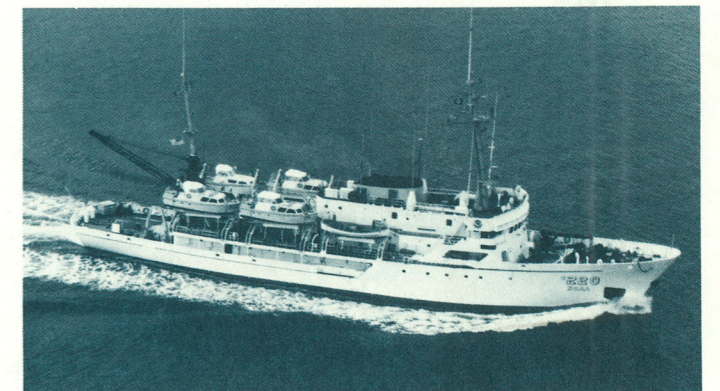
A Career in the NOAA Corps

The NOAA Corps is one of the Nation's seven uniformed services. It combines some aspects of a Naval service life with the scientific mission of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce. This combination provides an opportunity for engineering and science graduates to develop as technical managers and supervisors while serving as commissioned officers. The Corps is especially attractive to men and women who desire travel, a variety of assignments, the responsibility of leadership, and a career in service to their country.

PURPOSE OF THE NOAA CORPS

The NOAA Corps, a professional group trained and experienced in NOAA disciplines, provides the flexible and fast-response capability that is needed to meet many of the demands of today's complex scientific environment.

Officers of the NOAA Corps, smallest of the Nation's uniformed services, are on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a



week, when not on leave, and can be dispatched quickly and effectively under "military" type orders. Agreement to accept assignments at sea and in remote locations, as well as on fixed shore assignments, often on short notice, is implicit in NOAA Corps service.

A NOAA Corps officer's first assignment is invariably sea duty aboard one of NOAA's research or survey vessels. During this initial period, the officer gains experience in leadership and knowledge in marine science. These are valuable assets to the person and the agency during later shore assignments at NOAA offices and laboratories. Later sea duty assignments may lead to command responsibility as the officer advances in seniority. By changing billets every few years, NOAA Corps officers gain a broad overview of the Administration's scientific and technological programs.

The NOAA Corps forms a pool of technical expertise in NOAA's management and operational programs and provides its officers a unique opportunity for a career in science and service to the Nation.

NOAA ORGANIZATION

The NOAA Corps is a unit of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), a major Federal agency with more than 15,000 employees—38 percent of the Department of Commerce workforce—and an annual budget of approximately \$800 million.

NOAA's program activities are organized around four major groupings—fisheries, oceanic and atmospheric services, coastal zone management, and research and development. The agency's programs are supported by an Office of Management and Budget, and by a full complement of staff offices—from the Office of the General Counsel, handling NOAA legal affairs . . . to the Office of Civil Rights, ensuring equal opportunity for all NOAA employees . . . to the Office of Public Affairs, communicating NOAA's messages within the agency and to the public.

Briefly the basic functions of each major NOAA program are as follows:

FISHERIES Through its National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA manages, conserves and protects the living resources of the sea. Between 15 and 20 percent of the world's traditionally harvested fishery resources are found within 200 miles of America's coasts. NOAA administers the Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976—a unique law designed to assure that fishing stays within sound biological, economic and other limitations and that United States commercial and recreational fishermen have the opportunity to utilize all of the fishery resources within these limits.

NOAA performs basic biological and technological research through a nationwide network of 24 of the world's finest fishery laboratories. By implementing the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (as amended in 1958), the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, the

Endangered Species Act of 1973, and a variety of other laws, NOAA also seeks to protect vital living marine resource habitats and unique species of marine fish and wildlife—such as the great whales, porpoises, seals and sea turtles.

OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC SERVICES

NOAA keeps track of the world's physical environment. NOAA's National Weather Service reports the weather, and provides forecasts, warnings and other weather-related products, through an elaborate network—facilities across the United States including surface and upper-air stations, weather radars, and links with environmental satellites. NOAA's National Environmental Satellite Service manages the country's only civilian operational environmental satellites.

In addition, NOAA's National Ocean Survey prepares nautical and aeronautical charts and other navigational products, maintains the Nation's precise geodetic survey network and performs related hydrographic, oceanographic and survey activities in the environment. NOAA's Environmental Data and Information Service stores and classifies the vast quantities of data these observational services generate, and devises new methods of using this store of scientific data—on subjects as diverse as weather, marine geology and geophysics, earthquakes, and solar activity.

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT NOAA's Office of Coastal Zone Management administers the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, designed to assist States in reconciling these increasing, often conflicting, demands. NOAA funds assist coastal states in developing and carrying out comprehensive programs for managing their coastal zones, protecting valuable coastal resources such as wetlands and beaches, and increasing access for recreation. NOAA also provides Coastal Energy Impact Program grants and loans to State and local governments to offset the effects of such energy-connected activities as offshore petroleum development.



The Office of Coastal Zone Management also administers programs to protect and preserve unique coastal areas. NOAA's Estuarine Sanctuaries Program preserves and restores valuable estuarine system, and its Marine Sanctuaries Program protects unique areas of United States coastal waters and the Great Lakes for their conservation, recreational, ecological, and aesthetic values. Finally, NOAA is a source of innovative programs seeking to assure that decisions on matters such as ocean dumping, deep water ports, and outer continental shelf oil and gas development take into account existing or potential conflicts with other marine users.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT NOAA's research and development programs aim to improve our understanding of the oceanic and

atmospheric environments, and to apply this new knowledge to the solution of environmental problems. NOAA's Environmental Research Laboratories conduct basic and applied research in oceanic and atmospheric sciences, through a nationwide system of 12 laboratories. NOAA's Office of Ocean Engineering conducts advanced marine engineering development activities. Its Office of Marine Pollution Assessment studies the problems of ocean pollution. And NOAA's National Climate Program Office coordinates Federal and other efforts to estimate trends in global climate change.

NOAA maintains strong research links with the academic community. Its Office of University Affairs works to strengthen and expand these ties. And its National Sea Grant College Program supports programs at institutions around the country.

THE NOAA CORPS AS A UNIFORMED SERVICE

NOAA commissioned officers are subject to many of the same laws as are officers of the other services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and Public Health Service). Therefore, a look at the similarities and differences is in order.

The NOAA Corps Is Similar to Other Branches of Service:

- NOAA officers wear uniforms resembling those of the U.S. Navy and U.S. Public Health Service. Grade structure is identical to the Navy and Coast Guard.
- NOAA officers receive the same basic pay, allowances and the same on-base privileges (PX, Commissary, etc.)
- Medical care is provided for officers and their dependents at Public Health Service or Armed Forces medical facilities. A program of care in civilian medical facilities is also provided for dependents.
- 30 days of annual leave is earned per year.
- NOAA Corps officers, when assigned to military commands, are subject to their regulations and control.
- Retirement eligibility accrues after 20 years' active service. Roughly stated, you would have to put aside about \$300 a month of civilian pay in order to establish an annuity equal to that of an officer with 20 years of service. Social Security benefits are in addition to normal retired pay.
- Survivor benefits are provided in the event of an officer's death from service-connected causes while on active duty.
- NOAA officers in travel status are governed by the Joint Travel Regulations of the Uniformed Services, which also cover the other services.
- NOAA officers follow career patterns analogous with those of the other Services: out-

door work, travel, and a rotation of assignments.

- NOAA officers may be transferred to the Department of Defense Services for duty as required in time of war or national emergency.
- NOAA officers are covered by the provisions of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940.
- NOAA officers are covered by the benefits and services of the Veterans Administration, subject to their rules and regulations.

The NOAA Corps Is Different From Other Branches of Service

- NOAA officers are not subject to military law under the Uniform Code of Military Justice except when they are assigned to the Department of Defense.
- There are no enlisted or non-commissioned personnel within the NOAA Corps as in the other services.
- NOAA does not have military or naval bases as such; normally, "base housing" is not available. NOAA officers must travel to the nearest military base to use "base facilities" such as exchange, commissary, etc.
- At this time, no commitment for a specific period of service is required. However, a NOAA Corps officer may be held in service after tendering resignation as the exigencies of service require. Generally, separation occurs within six months of the date the resignation is submitted.

ASSIGNMENTS AND CAREER SEQUENCE FOR OFFICERS

The NOAA Corps, with a currently authorized strength of 401 officers, is the smallest of the uniformed services. At any one time, almost one-half of the Corps is assigned to sea duty aboard the ships operated by NOAA. Some officers are assigned to mobile shore duty, the remainder to fixed shore duty. Assignments range from 1½ to 3 years in length, with sea duty alternating with shore assignments throughout a career.

SEA DUTY

Sea duty is the common denominator for every NOAA Corps officer. It is normally the first assignment for newly appointed officers.

Once aboard ship, an officer's duties will vary, depending upon many factors; size, location, mission of the vessel, the officer's background abilities, and special training, and finally, rank. These duties include ship-handling, navigation, surveying, carrying out oceanographic and geophysical investigations, as well as special scientific operations, and vessel management. Officers become involved in all phases of ship activities and are expected to be both ship operators and engineer/

scientists. Along with these duties, an officer must fulfill such other responsibilities as are required in the day-to-day operation of the ship.

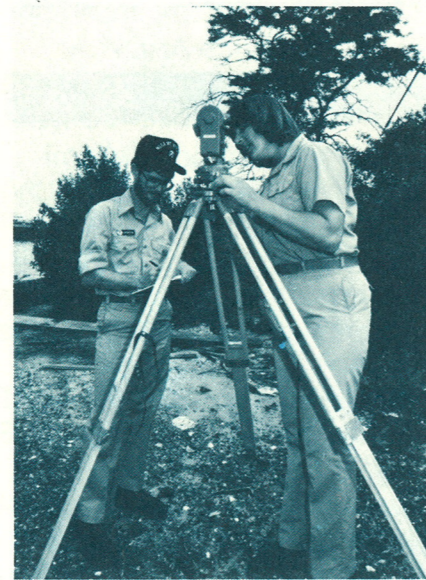
NOAA's ships varies between 60 and 300 feet in length. The larger ships are designed for long cruises involving physical oceanographic and deep ocean bathymetric surveying. The medium-sized ships do proportionately less oceanographic and more coastal work. Hydrographic surveying for nautical charts and fisheries research are the primary missions of these ships. The smallest ships are of special design used for current studies, wire drag investigations, or laboratory support. NOAA ships normally work about four months on a project, return for brief periods to home ports—Norfolk, Virginia; Seattle, Washington; or Miami, Florida,—and then go out for another three or four months. However, officers may be separated from their families for periods of up to eight or nine months when the ships are away from their home ports on extended operations.



MOBILE SHORE DUTY

Mobile shore duty involves a great deal of travel. This duty may be from a fixed location, but generally it is on a field party working in geodesy (precise latitude, longitude, and elevation surveying), photogrammetry, gravity, hydrography, or flight duty.

These parties may move as frequently as every few days or as seldom as once or twice a year. A special monetary allowance is paid to offset the increased expenses incurred. Mobile shore duty is not a mandatory part of every officer's career.



FIXED SHORE DUTY

Fixed shore duty may be in any component of NOAA, and offers the greatest diversity of assignments and experience. Shore assignments are located throughout the United States with concentrations of officers in Seattle, Washington; Norfolk, Virginia; Washington, D.C.; Boulder, Colorado; and Miami, Florida.

During shore assignments, officers may have the opportunity to work within their academic fields. Many of the billets require engineering or scientific expertise as well as supervisory responsibility. For those who wish to broaden their experience, shore assignments may be used to gain experience in areas outside one's academic field.

Also, fixed shore duty comprises the majority of most officers' careers and allows the officer an opportunity to experience an "office type" environment similar to that of a contemporary in industry or government.



OFFICER TRAINING

Initial training for all officers is conducted at the NOAA Officer Training Center, co-located with the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York. Generally, classes of appointees are formed three or four times a year for a course of 10 weeks duration. This course includes classes in uniformed service protocol, NOAA orientation, seamanship, navigation, radar operation and other related subjects. Upon completion of the orientation course, most officers are assigned to NOAA vessels, although they may attend a 2-6 week course in fisheries operations or hydrographic surveying before reporting to their ship.

Although the first ship assignment (usually about 2 years in duration) is a regular tour of duty as opposed to a training assignment, an officer can expect several months of on-the-job training before assuming complete responsibility for major shipboard tasks.

Advanced Training A large number of training programs exist which are designed to improve an officer's ability to serve in a particular job or for his entire career. Examples of these courses are SCUBA diving, computer programming, and firefighting.

After 6 to 8 years of service, usually following the second sea assignment, full-time

graduate study is available to a limited number of officers. Because this training period is limited to one year, completion of an advanced degree usually requires part-time study before or after the full-time assignment.

Each year, one or two officers—who meet the high physical requirements and indicate career interest in aviation—are selected for aviator training. Advanced full-time training in graduate school or aviation requires an obligation of additional service to ensure the government a proper return on its investment.

ADVANCEMENT

A newly-commissioned officer may expect to advance from the grade of ENSIGN to LIEUTENANT (JUNIOR GRADE) after 15 to 20 months and to LIEUTENANT after a total of 39 to 45 months. The exact time depends upon vacancies in the grade structure, since the NOAA Corps is limited, as are all the uniformed services, in the number of officers in each grade.

Increases in pay are granted with promotions and with longevity of service. Regardless of grade, pay raises occur after 2 years, 3 years, 4 years, and generally at additional 2-year intervals throughout a career. Cost of living increases are provided annually.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

Applicants must be citizens of the United States. Candidates for appointment to the NOAA Corps must hold a baccalaureate or higher degree—in engineering, mathematics, physics, oceanography, meteorology, or other physical, geophysical, or biological science discipline—from an accredited college, maritime academy, or university.

Regardless of the academic field of specialization, an applicant for appointment must have completed at least 48 semester (72 quarter) hours of NOAA related science, differential and integral calculus, and eight semester (12 quarter) hours of physics through mechanics, electricity, and light.

Physical standards are high. Uncorrected vision of 20/20 in each eye is prescribed, but waivers may be granted for visual acuity not less than 20/70 in each eye if corrected to 20/20. Color blindness is disqualifying.

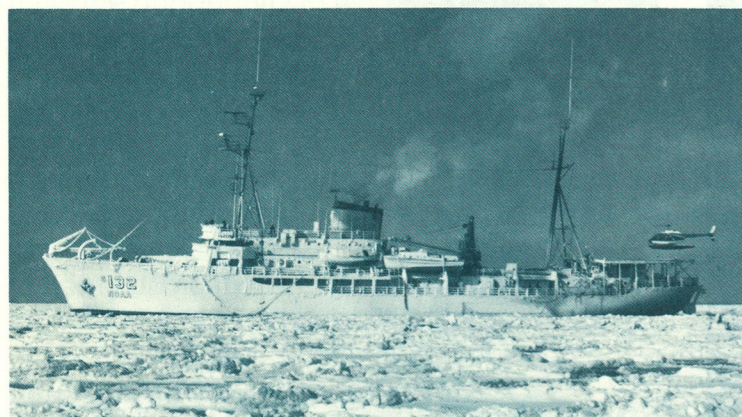
APPLICATIONS PROCEDURES

The application process begins with a personal interview with a NOAA recruiting officer, a required part of the procedure. At the conclusion of the interview, applicants will be provided the application forms for completion. Interviews are conducted at the recruiting offices and in college placement centers when recruiters visit selected campuses.

Applicants must be interviewed, and complete the required application forms, to be considered for the NOAA Corps.

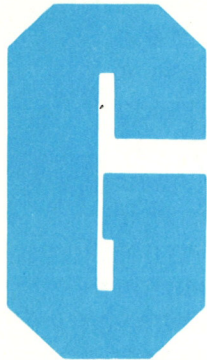
Students in ROTC are eligible to apply, but may not be appointed in the NOAA Corps without permission of their parent service.

The NOAA Corps is a voluntary service and the application is not binding unless the applicant is selected for a commission and formally accepts.



Since the training classes are dependent upon changing personnel needs, interested and qualified applicants should be interviewed and begin application at least six to eight months prior to graduation and/or availability date.

RECRUITING OFFICES



General questions on the NOAA Corps and arrangements for a personal interview should be directed to the appropriate NOAA office listed below.

**Recruiting Coordinator
Commissioned Personnel
Division NOAA (NC1)**

Rockville, Maryland 20852
301-443-8616

**NOAA Corps Recruiting Officer
Atlantic Marine Center
National Ocean Survey, NOAA**

439 West York Street
Norfolk, Virginia 23510
804-441-6653

**NOAA Corps Recruiting Officer
Pacific Marine Center
National Ocean Survey, NOAA**

1801 Fairview Avenue, East
Seattle, Washington 98102
206-442-7911

**Officer-in-Charge
NOAA Southeast Marine Support Facility**

1600 Port Blvd.
Miami, Florida 33132
305-350-4276

**Officer-in-Charge
NOAA Officer Training Center**

Furuseth Hall N-120
U.S. Merchant Marine Academy
Kings Point, New York 11024
516-482-8200 (Ext. 360)